


PATHFINDER[®]

ADVENTURE PATH[™]



ADVENTURE PATH  PART 2 OF 6

SWORD OF VALOR

PATHFINDER ADVENTURE PATH™

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<i>Bestiary</i>	B1	<i>Mythic Adventures</i>	MA
<i>Bestiary 2</i>	B2	<i>NPC Codex</i>	NPC
<i>Bestiary 3</i>	B3	<i>Ultimate Campaign</i>	UCA
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<i>Lords of Chaos, Book of the Damned, Vol. 2</i>	BOTD2	<i>Ultimate Magic</i>	UM

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The Road to Drezen

There's a lot going on in this adventure—mass combat, redemption, mythic monsters, mythic heroes, resource building, and more, but at its core, “Sword of Valor” is a classic “invade the dungeon and recover the treasure” plot. And while this adventure might look like it's got a pretty tightly scripted plot—with the PCs marching north, laying siege to Drezen, and then finally exploring the citadel and its dungeon—don't be afraid to go “off course” if the PCs do something unexpected. Even if they decide not to bring an army to Drezen, or worse, their army is defeated before the final battle—all is not lost. In the event that the PCs decide to invade the citadel without first defeating the army, feel free to add more low-level guards and soldiers to the citadel's defenses. Attacking Citadel Drezen while its army is still active should be more dangerous, but not automatically a death sentence. Stay flexible in how you allow the adventure's

events to unfold—the end goal should be the recovery of the *Sword of Valor* and the defeat of Staunton Vhane, but how the PCs accomplish this is in the end up to them.

Redemption

In “Sword of Valor,” the PCs will have ample opportunity to handle their enemies without violence. Not every foe in this adventure is a black-hearted dastard who was born to be bad. Many of them have fallen to their villainous ways or have been tempted or corrupted to serve as minions of the Worldwound, and if these foes can be captured alive, most of them can be redeemed. The adventure's text indicates whether a villain can be redeemed or is totally beyond redemption (the latter being rare). In “Sword of Valor,” the theme of redemption is still building from the first adventure, and won't come to a full head until the next adventure, where the PCs help a repentant succubus

become chaotic good, but you should let the PCs know that summary execution of prisoners isn't always the only option for righteous heroes. You can use their NPC allies to suggest mercy, but when you do so, remember that nothing can sour players' attitudes toward redemption as much as the GM turning that supposedly redeemed NPC into a double-crossing traitor who stabs the party in the back. If you have plans to do something like this, you need to foreshadow the treachery and give the PCs an honest chance to forestall it and keep the NPC on the track to redemption. Put another way: if the PCs decide to redeem a captured villain and the villain starts down the path of redemption, only the failure of the PCs to keep the villain on that path should ever result in treachery, not arbitrary GM story fiat.

Non-Mythic Valor

In "Sword of Valor," the PCs are destined to be legends—be they legendary heroes or legendary victims. While the plot of this Adventure Path assumes these legendary acts are presented via the rules detailed in *Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures*, this doesn't necessarily have to be the case in your Wrath of the Righteous campaign.

If you want to run Wrath of the Righteous as a non-mythic game, you'll have some work cut out for you in the coming adventures, but it might not be as much work as you expect. Regardless of whether you use *Mythic Adventures*, Wrath of the Righteous is a high-powered campaign, and there are many ways you can adapt the adventure so that it works for a non-mythic group. Listed below are some tips on how to adjust your game so that you can run "Sword of Valor" for a non-mythic group, but you should also check out the messageboards at paizo.com, where I and plenty of other gamers will be around to offer advice.

Ad Hoc Experience: If you run a non-mythic group, you should strongly consider running the PCs on the fast XP track. Furthermore, each time the PCs would earn an even-numbered mythic tier, you should award them a story award in XP that advances them to the next experience level. You can spread out these story awards as you wish if you don't want to have giant chunks of XP hitting the party all at once. It might be easier to not award XP at all, and instead just inform the PCs when they level up, following the advancement track given for the adventure on page 6. If you do this, the PCs should gain a level upon defeating the mythic chimera, and should end the adventure at 10th level.

More Characters: Consider giving each PC Leadership as a bonus feat, so that each will have a cohort to lend support in battle. Keep in mind that more cohorts can quickly cause play to grow cumbersome, so if these cohorts are NPCs with supporting roles, such as healing or item crafting, they can stay out of combat and still help to bolster their leaders.

Alternate Ascension: At the end of the previous adventure, the PCs had their moment of ascension to mythic power

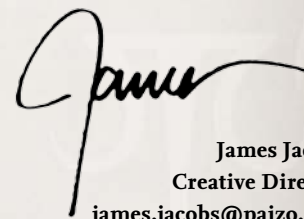
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Wayne Reynolds presents Staunton Vhane, the dwarven antipaladin and traitor crusader who now rules Drezen, along with the iconics taking on a pack of brimorak demons eager to claim bragging rights for stopping the heroes of the Fifth Crusade. Something tells me those brimoraks are deluding themselves.

when they absorbed the power of the *wardstones*. If you're not running a mythic game, you should still grant the PCs a boost in power at this point. The easiest way to do this is to tell the PCs that they can increase one of their ability scores by +4 and two by +2—these increases stack with all other increases. This ability score increase matches the increase a PC eventually obtains after gaining 10 mythic tiers—while getting all these increases at once might seem like an incredible boon, with the lack of other mythic powers, it's a pretty good replacement that still feels like a legendary award to the players while not relying upon mythic rules to model the boost in power.

Hero Points: Consider using the hero point mechanic from the *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* as well. This helps the players take control of their characters' fates and adjust the flow of the story in ways that allow them to accomplish normally impossible tasks. If you use hero points, each time you reach a point in the adventure where the PCs would normally gain a mythic tier, they should earn a number of hero points equal to the tier they would have gained. Of course, you can alter these hero point awards as you see fit.

Adjust Statistics: Finally, take some time to look ahead, and if you see a particularly high-CR encounter, adjust things downward to be something that you feel the PCs can tackle. You can still run mythic monsters against non-mythic players—just keep an eye on the creatures' CR, regardless of whether the creatures are mythic or not. If you absolutely don't want mythic rules in your game, you'll need to rebuild the monster or NPC to hit its target CR using the non-mythic rules—this takes a bit of work, but in the end, as long as the foe is a tough encounter, the way it's built doesn't matter, and the players will never notice the difference.



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